

COL Ryan;
CSM Moton;
Other distinguished guests and visitors
Unsere Deutches Freunden
Soldiers and Families of Delta Company

Welcome to this great ceremony, and thank you for joining us today as we mark the opening of a new chapter in the proud history of Delta Company, 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment.

Soldiers of Delta Company, you look great today! It's obvious you take great pride in yourselves, and in being part of the Dragon team, and I commend you on your professional appearance. Even more so, I commend you and thank you from the bottom of my heart, for the superior service you render on a daily basis to this Battalion, the Army and to your nation. Let's give these heroes a round of applause.

Delta Company, over the past 5 months I've had the distinct privilege of watching you prepare for this deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. It began with your participation in the Battalion's Convoy Live Fire Exercise here at Grafenwoehr in August, where you proved your ability defend yourselves during convoy operations by acquiring and engaging targets from moving vehicles. You continued your preparation by participating in a world-class Certification Exercise at Hohenfels in September, where you demonstrated your ability to conduct all of your Mission Essential Tasks in a Contemporary Operating Environment. Your Observer Controllers were impressed by your tactical and technical expertise, and the lessons you learned in the rolling hills of Bavaria will ensure your success in the deserts of Iraq.

When we began to liaison with the unit you will be replacing downrange, we discovered requirements for you to conduct Air Traffic Services using systems you don't have in Delta Company, so we set up training for you using assets from across the Army and even sister services. As you went through ATNAVICS New Equipment Training, TTCS training, TAIS upgrade training, and Enhanced Tower Operator Simulator training, your trainers spoke with one voice: "Delta

Company is a squared-away unit; they are professional, competent, and learn quickly.”

Families of Delta Company, Claudia and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you over the last five months. Our visits to your Family Readiness Group meetings have reassured us that you have a strong, vibrant, and active Family Readiness Group that will be there for you throughout this deployment. I can't tell you how much we enjoyed our weekend with you at the Edelweiss for your Pre-Deployment Marriage Enrichment Seminar, and we are confident that the time you spent there will set your families up for success throughout this deployment.

I want you to know that you are in good hands while your service members deploy downrange. Claudia and I have never met a stronger, more caring Family Readiness Group leader than Kathy Jordan. You have a great Rear Detachment Command team as well. During the company's Certification Exercise at Hohenfels in September, we ran the Rear Detachment through the ringer back here in Grafenwoehr. LT Villanova and SFC Mayfield handled everything we threw at them with great professionalism and the wisdom of Solomon. They will serve you well during this deployment.

Delta Company, CSM Kennedy and I are extremely proud of you and the great work you've done to prepare for this deployment. Every time we've visited and talked with you, you've told us “we're ready to go...let's get it on”. The day for your departure has finally come, and we agree...you are ready to go! We look forward to hearing great reports from our sister battalion, 1st Battalion 58th Aviation Regiment, about the tremendous things you will accomplish downrange. Your unit has a proud heritage, and you now have the opportunity to add a riveting chapter to the Delta Company history by conducting your mission downrange with the same professionalism and competence you are known for here in Germany. Remain vigilant, and look out for each other. Keep your powder dry, your sabers sharp, your mounts well-groomed, and your eyes scanning the horizons as you provide safe, orderly and expeditious air traffic services to our nation's aviators and airmen downrange.

As fate would have it, CSM Kennedy and I won't be here to receive you when you return, for we'll be deploying downrange to replace 1-58, so the next time we'll see each other will be about 8 months from now downrange. Until then, you will be in our prayers daily, and 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment wishes you mission success, Godspeed, and a safe return.

Victory's Guardians!
Iron Eagle!
Iron Soldiers!